



#iGiveCatholic and the Generosity Revolution

Inflation, Supply Chains and Pandemics, Oh My! The Wizard of Oz reminded us of the very things that we should be wary of, but we just don't listen, do we? Similar dangers that faced Dorothy, face our communities in our modern times, yet we keep pushing forward despite the signals. Generosity is our destination and nothing deters us faithful people. Trust me, the data proves it.

Here we are in 2021 boldly traversing a new year of #iGiveCatholic on #GivingTuesday this November 30, as part of the U.S. Catholic Church's Giving Day. The giving day helps kick off the charitable season and brings the Catholic community together to give thanks and give back. This seventh annual #iGiveCatholic Giving Day will raise millions to benefit, both physically and spiritually, a countless number of people in need. This transformational giving comes via many generous hearts through a multitude of Catholic organizations nationwide... and it keeps on growing. One may stop and ask why or how is this possible with all that is going on? Last year over \$12 million in generous gifts poured in from around the world, literally, during the Giving Day to impact our communities as Jesus instructed us in Matthew 25: from feeding the homeless, teaching our children and furthering our faith. How are people being so generous despite the pessimism that challenges us on our journey of life? Well, there is a short and answer and a long answer. Both are fascinating.

The longer answer, offered succinctly, is buried in the data. I have been recently following this series of inspiring and challenging talks hosted by OSV Institute, the philanthropic arm of Our Sunday Visitor. These OSV Talks are TED Talks-style for Catholic leaders on impactful topics designed to inspire new thinking and spark a renewal in evangelization. I was overjoyed when one talk came out on generosity. The bonus is that it dove into the intersection of data and generosity, specifically A.I. (Artificial Intelligence.) The talk was by Nathan Chappell and was called [AI And The Future Of Generosity](#). Nathan eloquently lays out the case that individual charitable giving has been pinned near 2% of income for years and isn't changing, but it could. Nathan and his team dove into the data behind generosity and wanted to tackle something I could easily classify as lofty. They set out to decode generosity using machine learning. It sadly showed that generosity is showing signs of decreasing, yet is masked due to high-worth people giving more, so it is keeping the average at 2%. It also demonstrated hope in utilizing

this data to overcome what he calls 'Aristotle barriers' which are simply negative influences from being generous. In further examining these barriers mixed with other influences, it showed one of the only antidotes to decreased generosity is some influence of religion. His studies revealed that 16% of those affiliated with religion are more likely to give a gift anywhere. We know that religion teaches the virtues and values of giving back, but the data proves it. The astounding news from his analytical data is that any person associated with any religion gives back TWO TIMES as much as those that are not! We know now through data, what we knew in our hearts. "Church people" are more engaged and more willing to give.

The short answer is that data shows us that people of faith, us Catholics, are generous. Our world needs more generosity, which means, we need more Catholics! We know that with all the challenges in our society, it not only calls us to be generous, but the call becomes clearer in tough times to do so. So, this year for #iGiveCatholic, be joyful as you give back! Invite others to join you. Be sure to share that joy boldly with others and celebrate the love and hope that our faith gives us when we are generous. No lions, tigers and bears along our journey can take that away. So, go now, and be generous just like God has been generous with you!

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Anyone can participate in #iGiveCatholic by visiting www.igivecatholic.org and making an online donation to their preferred institution or organization on Tuesday, November 30, or during the advance giving phase. In addition, offline gifts in any amount are welcome and appreciated and may be sent directly to the participating organizations.

Our Sunday Visitor is pleased to serve once again as the national sponsor of #iGiveCatholic